

A Search after Knavery,⁽¹⁾

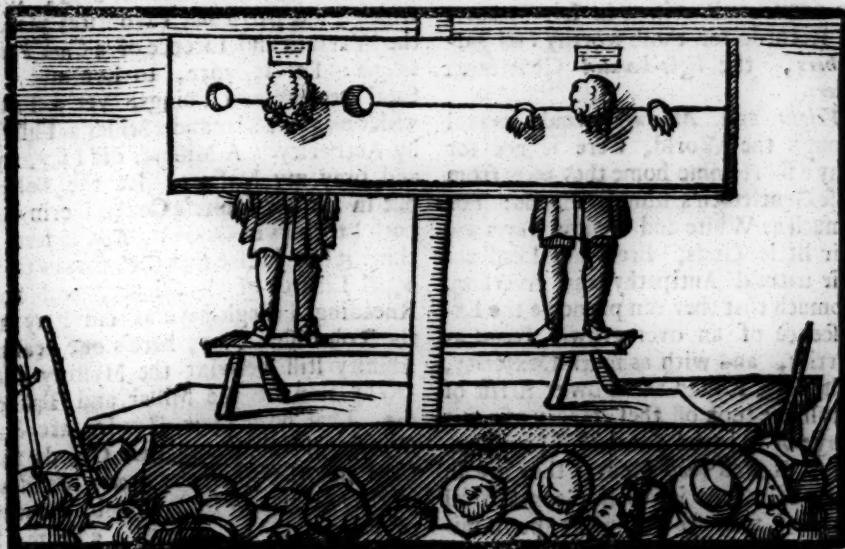
O R, A

Visitation of the BAKERS.

15 Dec. 1693.

Who have we here, the jolly Oven-Rakers?
Oh ho! those worthy Gentlemen, the *Bakers*.
Thro' these fair Calements of their Oaken
(House,
Behold the Fronts of Bras and Lugs of Sowse;
But is this the whole top of their prefermen';
To wear this Ruff of Wood instead of Ermin?

No, their Deserts t'a nobler Perch aspire,
And hope to mount one Ladders Round yet
(higher,
Whilst the last Collar that their Necks shall
(grace,
Shall be the Honour of a fair Hemp-Lace.



THE fair Effigies of this Honourable *Wooden Ruff* we here present you, otherwise scandalously call'd a *Pillory*, we assure you, is no uncustomary Ornament and Exaltation of the Brothers of

the *Mawkin* and *Oven-Pole*, but an Implement in all Respects as fit for the Necks of the Baking Fraternity, as a Halter for a Thief, or a Cardinals Cap for a Fryar; being indeed the only Collar of ~~Wood~~'s for the *Livery*.



Livery-Hood of the Modern Society of Mouth founders. That this hard Ruff, I say, and this high Holy Day Promotion are their Original Right and Due, challenged not only by their Diverse and Sundry Deserts and Merits; but likewise most graciously conferred upon them, as no less than Marks of Royal Favour; they are indeed the bountiful Legacies bequeathed 'em by no meaner Hands than good old Harry and old Ned the Third and the First, in the full and ample Solemnity, by and with the Authority of their Dons in Parliament, as a necessary Provision in fair Statutes and Records for those worthy Poor gut-pinchers, the light-handed Gentlemen Bakers.

Weight and Measure would travel through the World, were it not for many a short-come-home they meet from those Gentlemen's nimble Hands: For as much as White and Yellow Boys are their little Gods, Brads and Lead are their natural Antipathy and Aversion, insomuch that they can prune ye the Excrecence of an over-grown Pound as heartily, and with as much Dexterity, as the ab'l'st Round-the-Tower Artist of 'em all e're took off the Letchery of a fair George or a broad Elizabeth. For generally, as well read Men as they are in other Sciences, in their Geographical Learning they are damnable apt to mistake *Venice* for *Troy*.

Well, upon due Examination, who knows but the High and Mighty *Balsazar*'s Hand Writing-Vision on the Wall, might be some Conjuring Bakers Hieroglyphical Magick; and his great [*Mene, Tekel,*] no more than the *Mark* of their *Bread*, viz. by Interpretation, as the Text says, *Thou art weighed in the Balance*

lance and found too Light. Perhaps you'll say, That *Weight* and *Measure* are the old Standards of the Nation: And so our old Proverbs are our old Standards too: And how bold soever they make with the First, I am sure, they are very civil to the Last, for, *They measure our Corn by their Bushel*. And let Envy and Malice say what they can of 'em, I dare so far vouch for their Honesty, that they have no *Knavery* but in *Grain*: But what if they do make a little pinch-Weight, or so? There's a great many Human Frailties in this World, for which some particular Favourites plead the Warrant and Licence of a *Cum Privilegio*: For instance, to Lye and to Steal are very paw Things, yet a Traveller may be a Liar and a Miller a Thief, by Authority. A Miller, did I say, ay and pray my Masters, let the Baker put in for the Miller's Cozen German; both Brothers in *Grain*: And indeed I think it but Justice that they should take equal Liberty of Conscience, and the Kneading-Trough have as fair Play as the Toll-dish. Nay, here's one nearer Affinity still betwixt the Mystery and Occupation of the Miller and Baker, viz. That both their Trades are but *Grinding-Work*; one that Grinds the *Corn* and the other the *Poor*. Besides, if they do make a little bold by the way of short cut, or so forth, e've much good may't do 'em. They have this Justification on their Side, That the Baker only takes the Butlers Fee; a few Chippings, that's all; bar that the Butler chips it in the Bread, and the Baker by the way of good Husbandry, is a little before-hand with it, and chips it in the Dough. Nay, let all the Snarlers in the Town vent their ridiculous Spight and

and Out-cry against small Weights and shallow Measures, and the rest of their foolish Gibberish ; when we have this unanswerable Vindication of our Cause : For as 'tis notoriously known, by a Long Old Custom, Time out of Mind, That the Baker is obliged to sell Two Measures of his Bran for One, where's the Fault if he makes himself a little harmless Reprizal, by Selling of One Measure of his Flower for Two ?

In short, to do the Baker Justice, and refute all the Vulgar Errors of Popular Clamours and Calumny, he sets up and values himself for that extraordinary Man of Morals, being indeed the True Copy from no meaner an Original than the quondam famous *Pharisees*, and season'd with no less than their illustrious *Leven* of never-sleeping Memory.

Nay, my good Masters, let grinning Fools talk what they please, I say again and again, That the Baker is not only a Man of Morals but of Religion too, Religion, let me tell you, enough to set up for a Disciple, even one of the Twelve, as no less than the Rightful and Lineal Successor of the Great and Memorable *Iscariot*, that carried the Purse and the Curse ; only with this small Difference between 'em, his Office was to buy in the Bread, and the Baker's, just such another trusty Steward, is to sell the Bread.

Nay, I can assure you, Religion is not the only Blazon in their Scutcheon ; for, if possible, they have one High Top-and-top-gallant more, Known and Glory ; for the Bakers boast the Honour of being oftner visited by the Great Horse and Gold Chain than the whole Twelve Companies. The Lord Mayo's Planter moves as orderly, and

so naturally to the Baker's Shop, that his Lordship may e'ne lay the Reins upon his Neck, and trust him to find his own Way thither : And there the proud Baker, at this Illustrious Visitation very rarely fails of that infallible Triumph, viz. of doaling out his Favours by whole Baskets-full ; and as no small Feather in his Cap, has the Prayers of the whole Colledges of *Newgate*, *Wood-street*, *Poultry*, &c. as a most generous Patron and Benefactor of those hungry Foundations.

Nay, to illustrate their whole Mass of Glory, perhaps their Ingenuity is not the least conspicuous of their numerous Virtues and Faculties : For example, What think you of some Hundreds of *Chalk-Whiting*, by a genteel Legerde-main, Shuffled in for Tincturing their Flower. Can any thing be a deeper Philosophical Preparation, or a more Noble Piece of Art ! For what are our poor mortal Frames but so many Tenements of Clay, and consequently (thanks be to the kind Baker) what so proper as White-wash and Loomwork, for our inside Decoration ? Besides, is it not highly reasonable, that as Bread and Wine are the Fundamentals of the whole Creation, so the Vintner and Baker should concert their Operations ; and therefore, as Lime is so famous an Ingredient for Wine-brewing, why not Chalk for Bread-baking ?

Nay, here's Twenty other Conveniences more : For, First, if the People are aggrieved at the smallness of the Bread, what can be a properer Medicine than Chalk against Heart-burning ; and consequently (*Probatum est*) what a more agreeable Bread-Compound than Whiting ? Next, what is more naturally :

rally *Coffive* than Chalk ; and therefore considering how dear Bread is, to make a little Mony to go the farther, what can be honester than for the Baker to cater such Provant for our Stomachs as will stay longest with us ? And, Thirdly, here's a whole National Benefit, in this ingenious *Chalk-bread*, of indulging all the Green sickness-Girls in the Town, without giving them the Trouble of scraping of Walls for their Breakfast ? And by this last Expedient, how many People are here obliged at once : First, all the Landlords, by secur-ing their Tenements from the daily Breaches made in their Walls by those fair Hands, for the aforesaid Green Sickly, Puling Dainties. And, Secondly, here's all the Batchelors most highly indebted to them for making 'em such pleasant Doctors-Work in the Ad-ministration of the necessary Physick for the Cure of that Maiden Distem-per.

And, as a farther Sample of the Wit and Depths of these *Virtuoso's*, what notabler Ingenuity than the late modern Invention of *Turnip-Bread* ? How many round-about Sea-Voyages, up to *Bear-Key*, and as many Fresh-Water down-Tides to *Queen-biths* are here saved by a short Cut of *Hai-Gee-Whoe* from *Hackney*, to borrow the kind Help of a *Turnip-Cart*, to eke out the short-ness of the *Cornjack* ? a second *Meal-Tub-Plot* ! and worthy the Head-piece of

such doughty Projectors ! Besides, when their Noble Exploits and Chivalry shall all in good Time advance them to their enchanted Castles, the *Wooden Ruff-Preferment* above-named, nothing so pat for the necessary Furniture of that Cavalcade , for if the Hegler's Bas-kets can but supply Rotten Eggs, they have Turnip - Tops of their own, just ready at Home, for their additional Salutation and Entertainment : For which Post of Honour, their expected Desert and Reward, we leave 'em to their due Congratulation , where we heartily desire they may meet all the best Reception imaginable in full Weight and Measure, and lose nothing but a little spare Leather they leave behind them.

*But, bold, my Bread-Batch Members of the City,
Ere we shake Hands, accept this Farewel Ditty ;
How can our Muse, alas, forbear to raise
Her highest Notes to your exalted Praise !
A Theme o'er your own Crickets must inspire,
And tune that chirping Salamander Quire.
You, whose miraculous Renown I examine,
Are Wonders that ev'n live by Fire and Famine.
Dearib makes your Feast, nobly fat and fair you*

(going)

*Ev'n in the Reign of Pharaohs leavest King,
But it's so strange to see you so well thriven ?
When master'd by that precious Dew of Heaven,
No less than the poor Orphans flowing Tear,
That falling Drop that plumps you up so fair !
Nor do you only claim that basid Wealth,
Your Purses and your Constitutions Health.
Those well-grown Squobs, your Morals and your Manners
Your Consciences are larger than your Paaniers.*